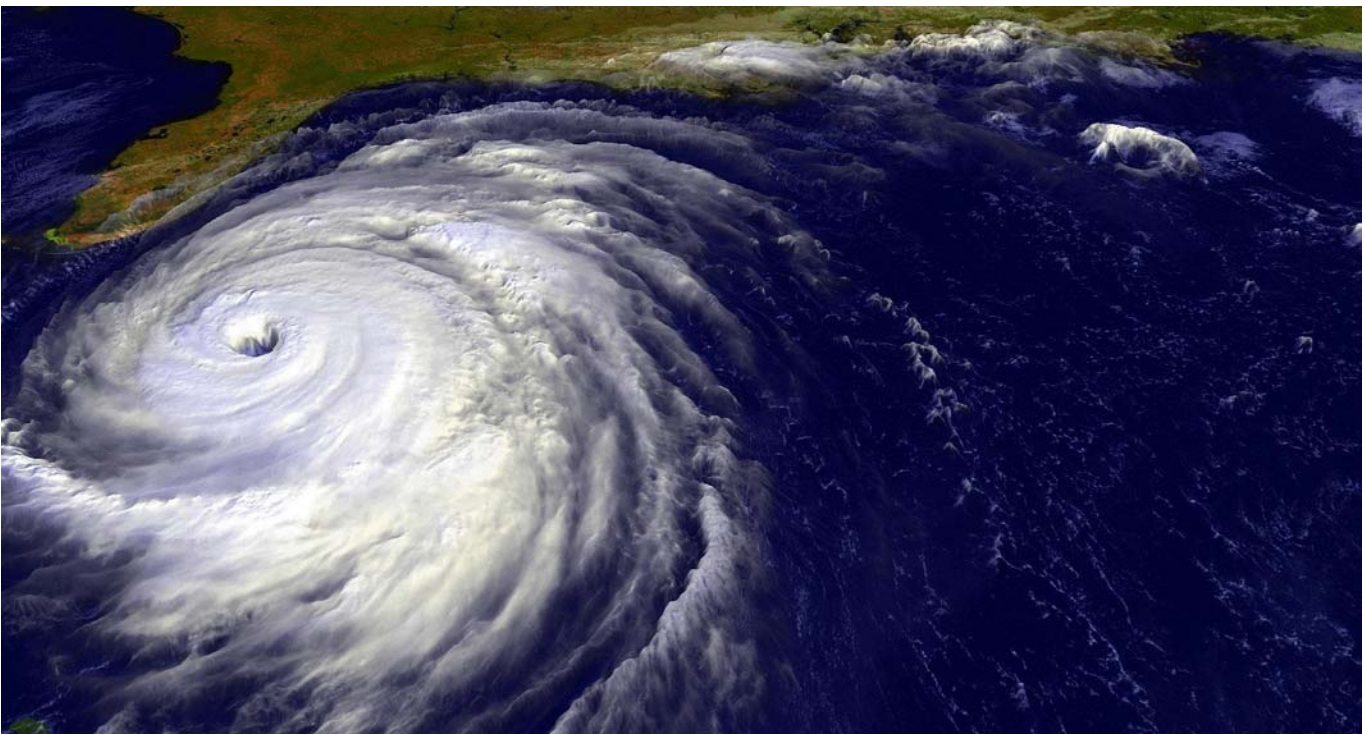
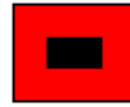


# Upper Chesapeake Bay Maritime Hurricane Contingency Plan



## 2005

### UPPER CHESAPEAKE BAY MARITIME HURRICANE CONTINGENCY PLAN (PORT PLAN)

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**UPPER CHESAPEAKE BAY MARITIME HURRICANE CONTINGENCY PLAN  
(PORT PLAN)**

**U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security**

**United States  
Coast Guard**



Commander  
U. S. Coast Guard Sector Baltimore

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16465  
01 May 2005

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed is the Upper Chesapeake Bay Maritime Hurricane Contingency Plan. This plan is applicable to all waterfront facilities, marinas, and vessels within the Captain of the Port (COTP) Baltimore Zone defined in Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 3.25-15. This plan is designed to advise the maritime community of the sequence and timing of COTP decisions and actions during periods when the Port is threatened by a hurricane. It also recommends actions that should be taken by vessels and waterfront facilities to prevent and/or minimize storm related deaths, injuries, and property damage.

This plan is effective upon receipt and supercedes all previous editions of the COTP Baltimore Maritime Hurricane Plan. Changes to the plan will be made as required and sent to those on the official distribution list. Comments and recommendations regarding this plan are welcome and should be addressed to LT Rocklyn McNair at (410) 576-2662 or via email at [RMcNair@actbalt.uscg.mil](mailto:RMcNair@actbalt.uscg.mil)

Sincerely,

Curt Springer  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port  
Baltimore, Maryland

Encl: (1) Upper Chesapeake Bay Maritime Hurricane Contingency Plan

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**RECORD OF CHANGES**

<b>CHANGE NO.</b>	<b>DATE OF CHANGE</b>	<b>DATE ENTERED</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
CH-1	29 JUL 94	29 JUL 94	USCG ACTIVITIES BALTIMORE
CH-2	07 OCT 97	07 OCT 97	USCG ACTIVITIES BALTIMORE
CH-3	07 JUN 00	07 JUN 00	USCG ACTIVITIES BALTIMORE
CH-4	17 APR 02	17 APR 02	USCG ACTIVITIES BALTIMORE
CH-5	25 MAY 04	25 MAY 04	USCG ACTIVITIES BALTIMORE
CH-6	01 APR 05	01 APR 05	USCG SECTOR BALTIMORE

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**PART I – INTRODUCTION**

A. Background:

1. Each year, from June 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>, the communities and ports of the Atlantic Coast face the threat of hurricanes. Atlantic and Gulf Coast hurricanes routinely make landfall and adversely impact shoreline communities, killing over 50 people and causing more than \$100 million in property damage annually. Most hurricanes occur in August, September, and October, but they are possible throughout the six-month hurricane season.
2. Many of these destructive storms are weakened by the time they reach the upper Chesapeake Bay and the Port of Baltimore. Nevertheless, past storms have proven that our location provides only limited defense from the destructive power of hurricanes. The flooding and sustained high winds associated with these storms can combine to cause substantial damage to bridges, vessels, and waterfront facilities. Even relatively weak, slow moving hurricanes have been known to cause severe localized flooding in the region. Hurricane induced floods have clogged critical waterways with debris, created oil and hazardous materials spills, and undermined the structural integrity of piers, wharfs, and other waterfront structures. Floating debris can also damage pier support structures and has been known to hole or damage moored vessels. The extreme tidal fluctuations that often precede and follow the passage of hurricanes can cause even the largest commercial vessels to go aground. Finally, tornadoes and sustained hurricane force winds alone can cause significant damage to cargo handling equipment, storage tanks, pier-side warehouses, and vessels at anchor. The threat to our port community is real, making it essential that we share a common understanding of the measures required to increase our hurricane preparedness.

B. Authority: The provisions of Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 160 and 165, mandate that Coast Guard Captains of the Port (COTP) take the lead in ensuring the safety of ports. Specifically, COTPs are authorized to establish safety zones, to direct the handling, loading, unloading, storage, and movement of dangerous cargoes aboard waterfront facilities, and to order vessels to operate or anchor in whatever manner is necessary to protect life, property, and the environment.

C. Applicability and Purpose: This plan is applicable to all waterfront facilities, marinas, and vessels within the COTP Baltimore Zone defined in Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 3.25-15. The purpose of this plan is to:

1. Advise the maritime community of the sequence and timing of COTP decisions and actions during periods when the upper Chesapeake Bay and the Port of Baltimore are threatened by a hurricane; and,
2. Recommend actions that should be taken by vessels and waterfront facilities to minimize storm related deaths, injuries, pollution, and property damage.

D. Amendments: U.S. Coast Guard Sector Baltimore will incorporate amendments into this plan following an annual review. Suggestions and changes may be offered at any time, but are especially appropriate following the implementation of the plan during exercises or actual hurricane emergencies.

E. Distribution: A copy of this plan has been distributed to each agency listed in Annex G.

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**PART II – USCG COTP ACTIONS AND DECISIONS**

A. General:

1. Port Maritime Hurricane Conditions are set by COTP Baltimore in advance of an arriving hurricane and are primarily based on when hurricane force winds are predicted to arrive on the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay (or the COTP Zone). These predictions are based on information obtained from the National Weather Service. The intent of setting port maritime hurricane conditions is to provide the marine community with sufficient time to make preparations in order to minimize damage from heavy weather, so the COTP may accelerate or delay setting these conditions as appropriate. The five Port Maritime Hurricane Conditions are:
  - a. **SEASONAL ALERT**: Set on June 1<sup>st</sup> and remains in effect through November 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. **WHISKEY**: Hurricane force winds are predicted to arrive within **72 hours**.
  - c. **X-RAY**: Hurricane force winds are predicted to arrive within **48 hours**.
  - d. **YANKEE**: Hurricane force winds are predicted to arrive within **24 hours**.
  - e. **ZULU**: Hurricane force winds are predicted to arrive within **12 hours**.
2. The COTP will make information about changes in Port Maritime Hurricane Conditions available to the maritime community in four ways:
  - a. The Maryland Port Administration and the Maryland Pilot's Association will be telephoned individually every time there is a change in Maritime Hurricane Conditions.
  - b. Vessels will be notified through a Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNTM). Hurricane BNTMs will be broadcast on VHF-FM Channels 16 (156.800 MHz) and 22a (157.100 MHz).
  - c. State and local response agencies will be notified through a broadcast on the state mutual aid radio.
  - d. A regularly updated, recorded telephone message will identify the Port Maritime Hurricane Condition currently set and the time it was established. The recorded message will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling (410) 576-2682.
3. Additional questions concerning hurricane conditions should be directed to the Sector Baltimore Marine Safety Coordinator, who can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (410) 576-2693 or (800) 418-7314.

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B. **Specific Pre-Storm Actions:** In addition to setting hurricane conditions, the COTP will take the following actions commensurate with each port maritime hurricane condition:

1. **WHISKEY** (72 hours):

- a. Consult with representatives of the Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Pilot's Association, shipping agents, and other stakeholders in the port to identify and address concerns over port status, activities, and emergency preparations.
- b. Coordinate with the Maryland Pilot's Association regarding capacity and condition of designated emergency anchorages.
- c. Commence increased harbor patrols and advise vessel and facility operators of any conditions that require correction.

2. **X-RAY** (48 hours):

- a. Sector Baltimore will activate a "Crisis Action Center" (CAC) to coordinate Coast Guard and port preparedness actions. The Sector Baltimore CAC can be reached at (410) 576-2699 when activated (if no answer, call 576-2693).
- b. Contact waterfront facilities to determine the intentions of the facility and any vessels moored thereto.
- c. Contact deep draft vessels at anchor (or their agents) and determine their intentions.
- d. Inspect wharf and pier areas with waterfront facility representatives during harbor patrols.
- e. Spot-check marinas and waterways to determine the status of hurricane preparations.

3. **YANKEE** (24 hours):

- a. Each waterfront facility, with vessels moored thereto, must notify the COTP for all commercial, oceangoing vessels and barges greater than 300 gross tons desiring to remain in port at a designated facility or anchorage. The facility must ensure the safe mooring of such vessels at that facility.
- b. All inbound and outbound transits via the C&D Canal or Lower Chesapeake Bay shall be coordinated through COTP Philadelphia or COTP Hampton Roads, as appropriate. This requirement does not relieve the vessel's owner, master, or agent of their responsibility to make appropriate advance notices of arrival, IAW the requirements of 33 CFR 160.212.

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4. **ZULU** (12 hours):

- a. Close the port to all commercial vessel traffic (including vessel transits within the port). This prohibition will not apply to commercial vessels over 300 gross tons that have requested and received an approval verification number from the COTP to transit the Port of Baltimore. The approval of the COTP will only be granted if the transit can be made safely and mooring or anchorage space has been identified. The area affected by this order will include all Navigable Waters of the United States within the State of Maryland.
- b. Suspend cargo operations involving bulk liquid dangerous cargoes, unless permission is requested and an approval verification number is received from the COTP, for each such operation on a "case-by-case" basis. This includes bunkering and lightering operations. This special approval provision does not apply to operations involving Cargoes of Particular Hazard, which in every case, must be suspended (a definition of Cargoes of Particular Hazard is found in Annex E of this plan).

C. Specific Post-storm Actions: As soon as practicable following the passage of the storm, the COTP will:

1. Return the Port to Port Maritime Hurricane Condition Seasonal Alert. The port may be (or remain) closed to vessel traffic until the navigation channels can be surveyed and declared safe for passage.
2. Coordinate completion of channel surveys.
3. Conduct maritime damage and risk assessment emphasizing bridges, wharves, piers, channels, and anchorages.
4. If necessary, organize a post-hurricane meeting with state and local officials and appropriate port stakeholders to assess, outline, and prioritize the recovery effort for the COTP Zone. This may be accomplished through the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, as dictated by the severity of the storm.

**PART III – RECOMMENDED STORM PREPARATIONS**

A. General:

1. This part contains precautionary measures that deep draft vessels, waterfront facilities, and small craft can take to reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, or property damage in a hurricane. The safety precautions contained in this part are not the only precautions that may be necessary to fully prepare a vessel or facility. The unique characteristics of the vessel or facility, and the unique attributes of the storm may dictate the need for additional measures and/or modifications to the measures contained in these recommendations.
2. The COTP will continuously review the status of all commercial vessel and waterfront facility hurricane preparations and direct the correction of dangerous conditions. The COTP will issue orders only to those vessels or facilities that fail to initiate appropriate action.

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3. Nothing in these recommendations shall be construed as relieving the masters, owners, operators, and agents of vessels or the owners, operators, and persons-in-charge of waterfront facilities from their primary responsibility for the safety of such vessels or waterfront facilities during a hurricane.

**B. Vessels:**

1. When a hurricane threatens the region, small craft should be hauled out and secured well away from the effects of possible storm surge and high winds.
2. As noted elsewhere in this plan, all oceangoing commercial vessels greater than 300 gross tons must submit a written request (see Annex B) and receive permission from the COTP prior to transiting the navigable waters of the State of Maryland. The key factor in the COTP's decision to allow vessels to transit this area is the ability of the vessel to safely proceed to their next destination. This determination shall take into consideration the availability of a sufficient number of tugs when navigating thru restricted waterways; the suitability and availability of berths and anchorages; and wind and sea conditions along the vessel's intended route. If a vessel's intended route includes either Delaware or Lower Chesapeake Bay, then vessels must obtain the permission of either COTP Philadelphia or Hampton Roads (as appropriate) prior to getting underway.
3. The COTP Baltimore recognizes that the Port of Baltimore is viewed as a safe haven by many in the maritime community and that any vessel departing the port may have to head toward the storm to reach the sea. Since this can create situations that endanger life, the port, or the environment, the COTP Baltimore authorizes vessels to remain in port during hurricanes.
4. For vessels over 300 gross tons that are based out of or make frequent port calls to Baltimore, the COTP strongly recommends submitting a request for pre-approval prior to each hurricane season.
5. Annex A contains a detailed checklist of deep draft and barge recommendations. Annex B contains the commercial vessel authorization form for vessels over 300 gross tons seeking permission to remain in port. Annex C contains a detailed checklist for small craft.
6. Nothing in this plan is meant to limit the right of a facility owner, operator, and/or person-in-charge to deny a vessel permission to remain moored to his/her facility during a hurricane. See paragraph C.4 of this part for additional discussion of this issue.

**C. Waterfront Facilities:**

1. Waterfront facilities should secure hazards and halt cargo operations in advance of the storm's arrival to prevent unnecessary damage to life, property, or the environment.

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2. When Port Maritime Hurricane Condition ZULU is set, as discussed in Part II of this plan, the COTP will suspend cargo operations involving all bulk liquid dangerous cargoes, unless specific approval is granted and a verification number is received for operations (not including Cargoes of Particular Hazard – see Annex E).
3. The COTP will suspend operations when weather conditions threaten to reduce safety to an unacceptable level and the facility does not voluntarily suspend cargo operations.
4. Facilities that do not intend to allow vessels to remain moored at their facility during the storm, must provide sufficient notice to the vessel to allow time for the vessel to move to a safe mooring, hurricane anchorage or depart to sea. It must be understood that the initial decision to allow a vessel to remain moored to a facility for the duration of a hurricane rests primarily with the facility owner, operator, and/or person-in-charge. The facility or vessel must then request permission and receive a verification number from the COTP for commercial, oceangoing vessels and barges over 300 gross tons to remain at the facility. The owner, operator and/or person-in-charge of a facility and the masters, owners, operators, and/or agents of a vessel are primarily responsible for the safety and security of their facilities and vessels. The COTP will not arbitrate disputes between facilities and the vessels moored thereto. The COTP will continuously review the status of all hurricane preparations (vessel and facility) and direct the correction of dangerous conditions. The COTP will issue orders only to those vessels or facilities that fail to initiate appropriate action.
5. Annex D contains a detailed checklist of waterfront facility recommendations.

Curt Springer  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port  
Baltimore, Maryland

Annex A – Storm Preparation Checklist for Ships and Barges  
Appendix 1 – Recommended Precautionary Measures for Ships’  
Appendix 2 – Recommended Precautionary Measures for Barges  
Annex B – Form: Commercial Vessel Request To Remain in Port  
Annex C – Storm Preparation Checklist for Small Craft  
Annex D – Storm Preparation Checklist for Waterfront Facilities  
Annex E – Cargoes of Particular Hazard  
Annex F – Internet Resources and Hurricane Tracking Chart  
Annex G – Distribution List

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